GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:241
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2005
SETHUSAMUDRAM SHIP CANAL PROJECT
Ramadass Prof. M

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a detailed project report on the Sethusamudram Ship Canal Project has been prepared by the Tuticorin Port Trust;

(b) if so, the salient features of the Report;

(c) whether the Government is aware of the apprehensions of the local fishermen about this Canal Project; and

(d) if so, the measures taken by the Government to allay the fears of the fishermen?

Answer

MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) & (b) The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the project has been got prepared by the Tuticorin Port Trust by engaging Consultants. The DPR has estimated the total cost of the project at Rs. 2230 crores. The proposed channel will originate at Tuticorin Port and will run parallel to the median line between the two countries, and pass through Adams Bridge, Palk Strait, Palk Bay and end in the Bay of Bengal. The creation of the channel would involve an estimated quantity of 82.5 million cum of dredging with a completion schedule of about three years from the date of receiving the required approvals.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The channel is to be created more than 20 kms. from the main land. The apprehension of the fishermen that the dredging of the channel would affect the fish production is not well founded. Rather, the channel would facilitate movement of fishing boats from the Gulf of Mannar to Palk Bay and vice-versa. Tuticorin Port Trust, the nodal agency designated for the project, has carried out the campaigns aimed at allaying the misgivings of the fishermen in the project area. Further, the Environment Management Plan of the project is designed to reduce the environmental impacts to negligible or insignificant level.